

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 29th August 1903.

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ASSAM PAPERS.

Nil.

I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

THE *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August says:—

HITAVADI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

The prospects of the Tibetan Commission.

The work of the Tibetan Commission has not at all advanced. The higher Tibetan officials have not yet arrived at Khamba Jong, and lower Tibetan officials at the place are requesting the Commission to return. Dr. Morrison says that the attitude of the Tibetans is not very favourable, and that, however courteous their behaviour towards the foreigners, they will probably oppose their entrance into Tibet. On the other hand, a company of English troops has been ordered to advance by way of Sikkim. These are doubtless alarming news.

2. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 23rd August has the following:—

RANGALAY,
Aug. 23rd, 1903.

“ Outbreak of war probable ”

Something is very likely to turn up. Fish are making their presence clearly felt in the four places in which Russia threw her bait. War seems likely to break out as a fire on all sides. In south-eastern Europe war has, in a manner, broken out in the Balkan States and in Macedonia. The Sultan of Turkey is trying to suppress this rebellion and to exterminate the Christian insurgents, while Austria and Russia are protesting against his action. The English Premier, Mr. Balfour, seems stupefied and remains inactive. The rebellion in Macedonia will not be easily quelled and Russia will, in the end, be a gainer. Russian warships have made their appearance in Turkish waters, and the situation is daily becoming increasingly alarming.

Russia has become all-in-all in Persia. She is already the master of Northern Persia, while she remains *incognito* in Southern Persia with the object of cheating the English out of that portion of the Shah's Empire. Her army, however, is distributed over the whole country. On the Afghan frontier Russia has a military station at a distance of only forty miles from Herat, while on the north of Afghanistan countless troops are moving about the frontier of Balkh. The Northern Pamirs have passed into the possession of Russia, who has cast her net over the whole country between Persia and the Pamirs. No one can doubt that the Russian fleet will soon establish its supremacy in the Persian Gulf. Of course, the English will do their best to oppose Russia in this matter. But to weaken their opposition, she is trying to establish herself firmly in Tibet. By trying to establish herself permanently in Manchuria, Corea, and Tibet, she is exerting pressure upon China from two opposite directions. Japan is doing her utmost to counteract and reduce the pressure on China emanating from the north, and a war between Russia and Japan is by no means a remote contingency. The latter Power is purchasing large stores of grain from India and making speedy preparations for war. The Russian newspaper, the *Novoe Vremya*, warns Japan in a minatory tone that she should not court destruction by declaring war against Russia. To guard against any danger in the direction of Tibet, the English are pushing the Simla railway to completion, and laying vast stores of provisions in the neighbourhood of Simla, while they have completed the repairs of the old military road from that place to Tibet. In the direction of Darjeeling a broad military road has been constructed along the old bed of the Teesta river, large collections of provisions and military stores are being made, and almost innumerable European and Gurkha troops are being massed on the Siliguri route. The English Envoy has reached Khamba Jong, the town on the Tibet frontier, accompanied by a large military escort. The Lieutenant-Governor, too, has found it necessary to hurry up to Darjeeling. There is something ominous on all sides. Like the calm before a storm, there is something unusual and alarming in the Indian political sky. There is no knowing what will happen.

Russia has made a clever move. To add to the gravity of the situation, nothing can be predicted with certainty as to the probable attitude of the Amir Habibulla Khan. Nobody knows whether he is on the side of Russia or England, a friend or an enemy, while the strong, brave and invincible Pathans are now known to have equipped themselves with arms and provided themselves with arsenals and with factories for the manufacture of guns and military stores. These Pathans have always been hostile to the English. What if these Pathans have really become friendly to Russia? Who knows what will happen?

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

BANGA BHUMI,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

3. The *Banga Bhumi* [Calcutta] of the 18th August says that the police department is full of temptations strong enough to corrupt even good men, and the Sub-Inspector of the Tollygunge thana near Calcutta appears to be one of such victims to temptation. We had a talk, says the writer, with the Divisional authorities about the Sub-Inspector. They desire that complaints against the police should be made direct to them, and not through the medium of newspapers. By doing so, grievances may be removed and the *prestige* of Government may at the same time be maintained.

CHARU MIHIR,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

4. Isvarchandra Das, of Nalitabari, in the Mymensingh district, writes to the *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 18th August as follows:—

A boat sunk under a steamer.

A party of 19 persons, male and female, including the correspondent, were returning home in a boat after bathing at Nangalbundh on Sunday, the 22nd Chaitra, 1309 B.S. When the boat came into the Dhaleswari river near Taltolla, the India Steam Navigation Company's steamer *Barisal* came upon it and sank it with all the men and women in it. The steamer was not stopped, nor was its course changed, in spite of the cries and signals made by the men in the boat, it being a clear moonlit night. The correspondent himself managed to get upon the steamer and inform the driver and the *serang* of the occurrence, who instantly stopped the steamer and succeeded in saving the lives of 15 persons. Another man was found next day. Of the remaining two, both females, no news has yet been obtained. One of them is the correspondent's niece, Susila Sundari, aged 12, and the other is a woman of the *Namasudra* caste, an inhabitant of Panchchur. Information was given at the Munshiganj thana, but no clue has yet been obtained.

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 20th, 1903.

5. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 20th August publishes the following correspondence about the *chaukidari* system:—

Oppressiveness of the *chaukidari-tax*.

Tangail, Mymensingh district.—Ordinarily the *chaukidar's* duties are (1) to keep a sharp eye on thieves, dacoits, etc., and to prevent all sorts of crime in the village, (2) to register births and deaths in the thana once in a week, and (3) to help the police in investigating cases in the village. The first of these duties is discharged by a cry or two in the night at long intervals. As to keeping an eye on *budmashes*, the *chaukidar* sometimes helps them in their malpractices. In many places the *chaukidar* himself is the thief. In many villages the *chaukidar* is the inhabitant of a different village, and this makes it impossible for him to remain day and night in the village in which he serves. Again, the circumstances of a Bengal village, the manner in which houses are scattered at long distances from one another and surrounded by jungles and gardens, and the difficulty of paths make effective watch and ward impossible. It is rumoured that arrangements for boats will be made for the *chaukidari* work in the rainy season. This will be unnecessarily burdening the rate-payers with an additional expense.

The second duty of the *chaukidar* is seldom correctly discharged by him. He makes fever responsible for every death, and commits mistakes in reporting the ages of dead persons.

As to his third duty, the *chaukidar* is always very careful about it. If a police officer comes in the village he does everything, even the menial's work, for him. When a high official comes to the *mufassal* on inspection, it is the duty of the *chaukidar* to stand, flag in hand, on the road by which he passes. In this manner the *chaukidar* manages to secure the good-will of his superiors.

Formerly, there was only one *chaukidar* in every village, and he was the servant of the villagers and used to get an annual salary varying from Rs. 9 to Rs. 18. But now he is a police servant, and his salary has been increased to Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per month. Besides this, *panchayets* and *dafadars* have been appointed to superintend the *chaukidar's* work. As a matter of fact, the *dafadar* does no work at all. All this has brought about a large enhancement of the *chaukidari-tax*. Even the poorest villager, who cannot manage to make

his two ends meet, has to pay it at an exorbitant rate. If he fails to pay, everything he possesses is attached and sold.

6. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August says that recently he saw a number of chaukidars engaged in doing work in the house of a pleader of

The Bogra police.

Bogra town on the occasion of a *jatra* entertainment given in connection with his daughter's marriage, and the officer in charge of the local thana and a Sub-Inspector directing them in the work, rod in hand. Will there be no end of unlawful acts in Bogra town? Is the town outside the pale of the British Government?

7. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August has the following in its English columns:—

The chaukidari system.

If the British Government is entitled to credit for anything, it is for rendering the lives and properties of the people safe. Even those who entertain strong views about the benefit of the British rule so far as the material prosperity of the country is concerned, have no hesitation in congratulating the Government upon the success which has crowned its efforts in affording protection to the lives and properties of the people. But everything can be overdone. A Government whose executive heads can have very little direct knowledge about the people and their affairs are liable to errors for the remedy of which they must turn to accredited mediums of public opinion.

The Government have introduced the institution of chaukidar in the country with the praiseworthy object of stationing in each village a number of men who will always look after the safety of the people in respect of their lives and properties. Panchayats or village heads are entrusted with the duty of appointing these chaukidars, assessing the chaukidari-tax, and directly administering the Chaukidari Act. For the last few months we have been reading in the columns of the provincial papers many things against the institution of chaukidar and specially the highhanded proceedings of those who realise the chaukidari-tax. In order to arrive at some correct conclusions on the subject, we looked over the provisions of the Chaukidari Act with particular attention to the duties of the panchayats and chaukidars. But an acquaintance with the literature on the subject has only confirmed us in the belief that the Government has reckoned without its host. The institution of chaukidar can only successfully work if honest and public-spirited villagers can be appointed panchayats. But the classes from which panchayats are generally recruited cannot be expected to administer the complicated Chaukidari Act to the benefit of the people. If the panchayats do their duty by the people, we are at a loss to see why the maintenance of chaukidars in the village should be such a subject of complaint and a fruitful source of oppression to the people. The Chaukidari Act anticipated all sorts of contingent oppression and provided remedies against them. There are specific provisions in the Act in which it has been clearly set forth that people who earn only a nominal sum every day should be exempted from the incidence of this tax, that agricultural implements, and the tools of mechanics must not be touched for realising the arrears of this tax, that an equitable assessment should be made with special regard to the incomes of parties, that corruptions on the part of the panchayats or chaukidars will be visited with severe punishment, and so on. Then, again, if the duties of the chaukidar are properly discharged, such a safeguard is provided to the interest of the people that no one can reasonably grudge the nominal price they have to pay for such an advantage. But the thing is that the idea of a chaukidar which one forms by reading the Acts and following the intention of the Government in the matter does not at all correspond to the exacting, worthless, and corrupt batches of imbeciles that are known under that name in a village. One has to be aware of their existence by hearing a cry one or two nights in the week. Then there is the common and not altogether unfounded impression that far from being a terror to the *budmashes* of the village, they are always hand and glove with them. According to a well-known village proverb, they ask the thieves to steal and the house-owners to look sharp at one and the same time. It is even said that the lion's share of the booty goes to the chaukidars. These chaukidars do other sorts of work during the daytime and stand guard during nights, so that it is difficult

HITAVADI,
Aug. 1st, 1903.

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PRATIVASI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

for them to devote exclusive attention to the protection of the village against the malpractices of the *budmashes*. The death and birth returns that are supplied to the police outposts by these men are hardly reliable documents. The information supplied by these men as to the various details about death and birth in a village should not be made much of. In short, as the service of educated and qualified local residents as panchayats cannot be secured, we can assure the authorities that this institution of *chaukidar*, which depends upon the public spirit of the villagers for its successful working, can only be a source of trouble to the people. The people for the present do not gain anything by the service of the *chaukidars*, but they are subjected to no end of harassments for the payment of the tax. That the panchayats and *chaukidars* tease and trouble the people to such an extent as to exhaust their patience, notwithstanding the many beneficent provisions of the *Chaukidari Act*, is a sufficient proof of the fact that good agents cannot be procured for carrying out the benevolent intentions of the Government, and the institution requires either mending or ending.

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

8. A correspondent of the same paper writes from Konnagar as follows:—

Thieves at Konnagar, in the Serampore subdivision of the Hooghly district.

For about a month thieves have made the life of the poorer inhabitants of Konnagar miserable. In Manipara alone several cases of theft have occurred. Thieves entered the house of the late

Babu Ganga Sankar Mukerji on the 24th *Shravan* last, and carried away utensils worth about Rs. 70. Information was given to the Konnagar thana and to the Sadar thana of Serampore. But no enquiry has yet been held by any police officer. The people of Konnagar are in great consternation and can hardly sleep peacefully at night.

SAMAY,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

9. Referring to the reform of the Calcutta Police, the *Samay* [Calcutta] of the 21st August writes as follows:—

Reform of the Calcutta Police.

The attempts of Mr. Bignell, Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, to reform the Calcutta Police, are deserving of all praise. But we are apprehensive lest he should find it impracticable to bring about the much-needed reforms. Already there are indications that the energy with which he at first began work, has, to some extent, abated. We give below, what we consider to be, the main principles that should be acted upon in this connexion.

We do not believe that the subordinate staff of the police can be purged of all defects merely by punishing, or keeping a sharp eye upon the doings of some particular officer or officers. The number of constables far exceeds the number of officers, and nothing can be gained by trying to control the one class to the exclusion of the other. All the Executive and Judicial functionaries, from the highest to the lowest, those who have the slightest control over the police, must make a simultaneous advance and try their utmost, otherwise everything will end in failure.

A Committee ought to be formed, consisting of those officers who are directly under the Police Commissioner, and the work of supervision subdivided into the following four branches:—(1) Wine-dealers and cocaine-sellers. (2) Prostitutes and drunken brawls in brothels. (3) The doings of the constables. (4) General—Thefts, riots, murders, etc. In the last-named division, officers from the Detective Department ought to be employed. Each department ought to be placed under a well-known, able Superintendent. But able native officers should be employed as assistants, for, if Europeans are employed, everything will be grossly mismanaged.

If work be commenced on the lines indicated above, it will be successful. Without any such system, nothing can be expected. We may be mistaken in what we have said above about Mr. Bignell's work. But we have expressed our honest convictions in what we have understood to be the essential points in the work inaugurated by him, and we hold ourselves always open to correction.

BANKURA DARPAN,
Aug. 23rd, 1903.

10. The *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 23rd August complains that

Thieves in Bankura town.

thieves are causing great mischief in Bankura town. They entered the house of Babu Sri Nath Chandra Singh, of Bhadul, a village near Bankura, and carried away many valuable articles, severely hurting him and his nephew, Babu Upendra Nath Sinha, second clerk of the District Magistrate's office. The *chaukidars* do not

regularly go on their rounds at right. It is strongly suspected that these thefts are committed by the municipal *mehters*. It is to be hoped that the Magistrate, Mr. Gupta, will take notice of this matter.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

11. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 15th August is sorry that Mr. Aston, who sentenced to transportation for life the editor of the *Pratod*, a Marhatta paper, has been made a Judge of the Bombay High Court. The people of Bombay have become terrified at this appointment.
The appointment of Mr. Aston as a Judge of the Bombay High Court.
BHARAT MITRA,
 Aug. 15th, 1903.
12. The *Faridpur Hitaishini* [Faridpur] of the 17th August complains that Babu Mukundalal Ganguli, Honorary Magistrate of Bhanga in the Faridpur district, harasses parties to criminal cases by his arbitrary conduct. He proceeds with the cases up to 10 or 11 in the evening, and this causes great hardship to all concerned. He orders mufassal enquiries much too frequently, and poor people, unable to undergo the expenses called for thereby, are compelled to give up their cases. Government ought to see that parties to criminal cases at Bhanga are not put to inconvenience on account of the arbitrary conduct of the Honorary Magistrate.
The Honorary Magistrate of Bhanga in the Faridpur district.
FARIDPUR HITAISHINI,
 Aug. 17th, 1903.
13. The *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the 17th August complains that Babu Prakas Chandra Sinha, Subdivisional Officer of Feni, behaves most rudely towards the mukhtars of his Court and the public. There is no fixed hour for his attendance at Court. He generally comes to Court after 3 P.M. and rarely at 11 A.M. or 12 noon. He sometimes issues a notice to the effect that he will hold his Court in the mufassal at a certain place on a particular day. On the appointed day the parties to cases, with their pleaders, mukhtars, and witnesses, assemble there, when to their amazement, they hear that the Subdivisional Officer will not come and that he will try cases at Feni. So all these people are compelled to return to Feni at great trouble and expense. It is to be hoped that the District Magistrate of Noakhali will take due notice of these irregularities, and of the rule that an executive officer should not be allowed to remain at one place for more than five years.
The Subdivisional Officer of Feni.
SUHRID,
 Aug. 17th, 1903.
14. A correspondent writes to the *Barisal Hataishi* [Barisal] of the 18th August as follows :—
The third Munsif of Patuakhali.
 Notwithstanding all the protest and agitation against the irregularities of the third Munsif of Patuakhali, his conduct has not in the least improved. He has discovered a very convenient mode of getting rid of complex and contested cases. Coming to Court at a very early hour, generally at 10 or 10-30 A.M., he summons the parties, and when they are absent, as they generally are at such an hour, he forthwith dismisses their cases without even sending for the pleaders engaged in them. The zamindars and talukdars, whose cases are thus lightly disposed of, have to suffer heavily in consequence. In rent suits Nos. 589, 590, 595, and 588, of Pramatha Nath Biswas and others *versus* Isan Chandra Pal and others, which were being tried together, all, except the last, were dismissed on the 21st July on the ground that both the parties were absent, although Babu Digendra Sankar Sen, the pleader for the defendants, was present in Court and filed a petition asking for a postponement, and a similar petition had been filed by the plaintiffs' pleader on the preceding day. The object of the Munsif in thus dismissing cases on the false ground that both the parties are absent, even when the pleader for the defendants is present, seems to be quite obvious. No appeal would lie if a petition for revision under section 99 of the Civil Procedure Code be rejected on the ground of absence of both the parties, while an appeal would lie if a petition under section 103 were rejected on the ground of the absence of the plaintiff. The Munsif evidently selects the less risky course, and does not care for misstatement of facts. As a matter of fact, five petitions for revision under section 99 were actually rejected by the Munsif on the 8th August. We earnestly trust that our District Judge will take due notice of the above state of things at Patuakhali.
BARISAL HATAISHI,
 Aug. 18th, 1903.

SAMAY,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

15. The *Samay* [Calcutta] of the 21st August says that Babu Ramapati De, Munsif of Ranaghat, has been granted leave for one month and six days, and Babu Manmatha Chandra Basu has been appointed in his place. It is not clear whether Babu Ramapati will return to Ranaghat or not on the expiry of his leave. It is a curious coincidence that the Officiating District Judge of Nadia, Mr. J. D. Cargill, has been granted leave for one month at the same time. It is to be hoped, however, that the new Munsif of Ranaghat will do his work with a little care, for it was Babu Ramapati's undue partiality for a certain junior pleader of his Court that drove the other pleaders to rise against him.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

16. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August learns from the *Bengalee* newspaper that the authorities have made up their mind to appoint Mr. Hammond, the Private Secretary to Mr. Bourdillon, as the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta, on a monthly salary of Rs. 1,800. His Honour is trying to provide for his Private Secretary, because there is no hope of his becoming Private Secretary to Sir Andrew Fraser. The *Englishman* newspaper recommends a Civilian to the Chief Presidency Magistracy of Calcutta, but the writer sticks to his opinion that a Barrister-at-law would do better.

(d)—Education.

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 20th, 1903.

17. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 20th August writes follows :—
The Bethune College, Calcutta. The Calcutta Bethune College has, since its foundation, been under the management of a Committee. But the Committee has recently lost all its former power and activity. Although a Chief Justice is still its president, it has not now even a shadow of the authority and influence which it possessed under Sir Richard Garth's presidency. Later Directors of Public Instruction have deprived it of most of the powers which it possessed, in Sir Alfred Croft's time, in the matter of appointing teachers and professors. But all this has failed to bring the present members of the Committee to their senses. It is more than a month that Professor Aditya Kumar Chatterji has died, but his place has not yet been filled up. Does the Committee or the Director of Public Instruction ever think how the work of teaching can go on in this way? The Bethune College has got a small staff of professors, all of whom are overworked. It is easily conceivable that under this state of things the work of teaching must greatly suffer if the want of a professor is not soon removed. Professor Hari Nath De, of the Dacca College, took leave for 15 days only, and the Director appointed an officiating man to work for him during that short time. But the post of a professor in the Bethune College has been lying vacant for more than a month and no one cares for it. However that may be, an able professor of a good moral character should be soon appointed to fill up Aditya Babu's place. We would recommend Professor Sasi Bhusan Datta, M.A., of the Presidency College.

BASUMATI,
Aug. 22nd, 1903.

18. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 22nd August has the following :—
The unsatisfactory conduct of a School Inspector. It is essential that those who exercise control over schools in the capacity of Inspectors should be thoroughly disinterested and impartial men. Where power is allied to self-interest, injustice and oppression are inevitable. Mr. Nesfield, the late Director of Public Instruction, United Provinces, found it possible, in virtue of his office, to introduce his own books throughout those Provinces. But even that highly-placed officer was brought into discredit by the members of the local Legislative Council and had finally to leave those Provinces in disgrace. It was settled at that time that inspecting officers like Directors, Inspectors, Assistant Inspectors, etc., should not write or compile school-books. But this rule is not found to be honoured in the observance in all cases. In pursuance of the above principle, the constitution of the Text-Book Committee has been changed. No person who is an author of school-books can become a member of that Committee. That is why scholars like Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Sastri and Mahamahopadhyaya

Nilmani Nyayalankar have no place on the Committee. This disqualification extends even to those who simply revise books written by others.

It is therefore easy to see what rule should be made in regard to those who are in charge of the educational affairs of a division or a district. The experienced Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Pedler, is not probably unaware of the injustice and oppression that are committed when an Inspector has school-books of his own. There is quite close to us an inspecting officer of a high grade, who, by his conduct, is annoying and harassing the heads and teachers of schools. The officer in question is in the habit of inspecting schools in the company of a dozen or so of subordinate inspecting officers and performing his inspection duties very properly and laudably indeed by trying to inspire teachers, students, and subordinate Inspectors alike, with disgust for the text-books in use, thereby leading people to conclude that, in the opinion of the officer in question, his own books and the books in which he is directly or indirectly, openly or privately interested, are the only good books, and that all other books are bad.

Such conduct in an inspecting officer of a high grade is extremely reprehensible. No such mischief occurs where the Inspector is not himself an author of school-books. Self-interest is the root of all evil. It is almost treason in an educational officer of Government to find fault with the new educational scheme introduced by Government and thereby seek to render certain points in that scheme unpopular with the students. But it cannot be said that an action so reprehensible is not to be found in the conduct of any inspecting officer. Be that as it may, it should be seen that, actuated by self-interest, no Inspector may be able to do injustice. We hope that Mr. Pedler will promptly adopt such measures, and that it will not be necessary for us to revert to this topic.

19. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 26th August has the following in its English columns:—

The Presidency College, Calcutta.

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 26th, 1903.

Educational questions are much to the fore now. A sad refrain characterising all writings and speeches on educational affairs in India was too much even for official callousness and the Universities Commission was the result. Its recommendations threw the whole country almost into a hysteric raving which had its desired effect on the sensitive nature of Lord Curzon, that cannot afford to be violently plied. Neither the people of the country nor the Universities Commission have diagnosed the educational distemper properly. Party prejudice and vested interest have stood in the way of the real plague spots being fingered. Private colleges are no doubt very far from being what they should be, and the Government are quite within their rights in asking the proprietors of the private colleges to convert the institutions into so many respectable centres of high education. But the preacher, if he wants his sermon to be effective, must himself practise what he preaches. Then only it can be hoped that the sincerity of his professions and intentions will remain unimpugned. But if there is no correspondence between the precept preached and the example set, it is only natural that people will not take the words of the preacher too seriously and go on imputing to him all sorts of motives for playing the rôle of the mentor. The Government have not as yet washed their hands clean of all responsibility in the matter of dispensing high education. They have not entirely left it to private enterprise to make arrangements for the high education of the country. We have still some Government colleges in the country, which take the lead in the matter of imparting high education to our countrymen. But what is the present condition of these colleges? Take, for instance, the Presidency College—the premier college of Bengal. What is it now? A wreck of its once-glorious self—mostly a haven of mediocrities—a delusion, a snare. The external grandeur is there, nay being added to, but the spirit is gone—the dying institution has lost all its power for good and stands in a sort of deceptive magnificence to point a moral and adorn a tale. The Government, with all its protestations to the contrary, does not desire the further spread of true education in the country.

It is the inspiration of English literature, the electric spark of the Western methods of thought, that made us instinct with a burning desire to regain our life and activity as a nation. It is this English education which in the

early days meant only cultivating an acquaintance with the English literature that opened our eyes. English education, along with other English institutions, made the whole nation pulsate with new ideals and aspirations. They had their influence on the Religion, Literature, and the very habits and customs of the people. In short, they have set us in motion, and it rests with us to make the movement a steady march of progress. But the force which gave the first impulse, instead of being accelerated, threatens to die out. The centres of high education which touched the minds of our people and set them working for the good of the country have been converted into so many workshops for forging the earning instruments, the manufacturers knowing not to mould and shape, to polish and adorn, but only to hammer in a particular fashion. An examining University considerably told upon English education as a healthy nation-making agent, but its dispensation by mediocres of sorts has at last robbed it of all its usefulness as a purely educative factor. It no longer liberalises the mind, but cramps and enervates it. It communicates to the mind no higher aim, but only fastens upon it the dead weight of sordid and grovelling tendencies.

The thing is, we have very few teachers worth the name, even in the Government colleges, which are looked upon as model institutions. That English literature which inaugurated our national re-awakening in the hands of its devoted and respectful expounders, has no inspiration for the modern race of young men. The reason is not far to seek. Those whose idea of teaching consists in mechanically reproducing what they themselves only mechanically acquired, cannot be expected to do justice to the thoughts that breathe and burn. The Calcutta University, by introducing a stereotyped sort of examination, has made teaching a much easier task than what is generally understood by it. Nowadays teaching has come to dictating notes, speculating about likely questions, and devising all sorts of means for making a short work of acquiring knowledge. We doubt if on the present staff of the Presidency College there are many men who can even do these duties of a teacher as simplified by the Calcutta University. Teaching in the Government colleges is now generally done by men who are not credited with a scholarship of high order, far less with that power of exposition, the *sine qua non* of a good teacher. In fact, there is no attempt at exposition, no exchange of ideas, the class room is filled with writing automata sitting near a dictating automaton. Those professors that had any reputation for erudition, clear exposition, or other tutorial qualifications have been shunted off to the inspecting line. Except Mr. Percival, those who are still in the line do very little to keep up their reputation. Of late the educational authorities have been showing a decided tendency to fill up vacancies in the Presidency College with the nondescripts that come in their way. Its good name, its traditions about the scholarship of its professors are all gone, and any young man who has wheedled a degree out of the University can now look forward to a billet in the Presidency College. The path to promotion is everywhere the same, and it is not difficult to imagine how graduates of mediocre abilities ingratiate themselves into the favour of the educational authorities. The sort of character and stamina which the college authorities make an exhibition of when there is any occasion for doing so, is not also calculated to make of our young men, who see these examples, self-respecting and independent members of the body politic. It is too much to expect that the Presidency College will again come to have on its staff men who will revolutionise the educational ideals of the country, but the want of good professors of English literature is being so much felt by the students, that many of them are thinking of ceasing to be mulcted in Rs. 12 for nothing.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

BHARAT MITRA,
Aug. 15th, 1903.

20. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 15th August is sorry that the Municipal authorities are very careless about the sanitation of the Northern Division of the Calcutta Municipality. They think that the rate-payers of that Division, who are all natives, can do them no harm. Of late, Babu Radha Charan Pal addressed a letter to the Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation

drawing his attention to the filthy and unclean condition of the streets and lanes in the Northern Division. The Chairman's reply is such as to beget the conviction that the Municipal authorities do not think it worth their while to keep the native quarter in a cleanly state.

21. A correspondent, writing to the *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 18th August, complains that the condition of the tanks and drains in the Mymensingh town is notoriously bad. The inspection remarks of the Sanitary Commissioner bear ample testimony to this. During the rains the condition of the roads, not excepting the broad streets, becomes horrible. The *mehters* do their work most carelessly, and often expose night-soil in the streets to the great annoyance of the inhabitants. It is much to be regretted that the Municipal Commissioners are quite forgetful of their duties, and pay little or no heed to the health of the town, and take no steps to remove the inconvenience of the people.

CHARU MIHIR,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

22. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 20th August writes as follows:—
The Calcutta Municipality's congratulation to Lord Curzon. Messrs. Kali Charan Palit, Cotton, Simmons, and Braunfeld, all of whom are elected members of the Calcutta Municipality, opposed the proposal of tendering the Corporation's congratulation to the Viceroy on the extension of His Excellency's term of office. Will not the Corporation's joy be turned into bitterness if the rate-payers of Calcutta express themselves against the proposal and severely criticise the working of the Municipality in public meeting? But the band of sycophants need not fear anything of the kind, because the rate-payers are lifeless and devoid of all moral courage. Again, who was that Adhya who expressed, from the side of the poor people of Calcutta, delight at the extension of His Excellency's term of service? We should like to see his credentials proving his title of an elected representative of the poor rate-payers of Calcutta.

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 20th, 1903.

23. The same paper writes as follows:—
The election of the License Officer of the Calcutta Municipality. Everyone knows how the native rate-payers of Calcutta live under their new Municipal Government. The native officers of the Municipality seldom receive justice from it. Recently the Municipal Chairman and the European Commissioners gave a fine proof of their sense of justice in the matter of the appointment of their License Officer. Babu Jogendra Nath, a graduate of the Calcutta University, has been serving in the License Department for nearly 20 years. He officiated as License Officer on many occasions, and on the last occasion for two years. The income of the License Department increased under Jogendra Babu. Former Chairmen of the Municipality always used to speak highly of him. But Jogendra Babu is a native. And so a certain Mr. D'Cruz has been appointed License Officer. Whatever his qualifications may be, Mr. D'Cruz is a Eurasian. The appointment was made by election at a meeting of the General Committee, but the Chairman's conduct on the occasion was most unjust and improper. Clause 14 of the Municipal Procedure prohibits any discussion of the merits of candidates on the occasion of election. But at Mr. Simmons's request the Chairman violated this rule in favour of Mr. D'Cruz. Afterwards he sought to console Jogendra Babu's supporters by saying that a Deputy License Officership would be soon created and Jogendra Babu would be appointed to it. Such is the purity of the system of election and such the independence of the General Committee! How long will the rate-payers suffer in this manner?

SANJIVANI.

24. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August writes as follows:—
The Calcutta Municipality's congratulation to the Viceroy. We are not surprised to see the difference of opinion, although we are sorry for it, which gave rise to a furious discussion in the last Calcutta Municipal meeting on the subject of offering congratulations to the Viceroy on the extension of His Excellency's term of office. To tell the truth, Maharaj-kumar Prodyat Kumar Tagore did a thoughtless act by suddenly making his proposal at the meeting, and we are obliged to say that Mr. Cotton's speech on that occasion reflected the views of the native rate-payers of Calcutta in the matter. Although there is no denying the fact that Lord Curzon deserves praise for many of his actions taken as a whole, yet it must, at the same time,

HITAVADI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

be observed that he has done nothing to earn the gratitude of the native rate-payers of Calcutta. Whatever improvements may have been made in the European quarter, the condition of the native quarter of the town has become worse under the new Municipality. Besides this, Lord Curzon has been instrumental in introducing the Calcutta Municipal Act, which has deprived the citizens of the town of local self-government. How is it then possible for them to congratulate His Excellency with all their heart on the extension of his term of office?

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 22nd, 1903.

25. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd August has the following in its English columns:—

The Calcutta Tramway Regulations.

At last the much-looked-for Tramway Regulations have been published in the newspapers. The General Committee of the Corporation have made out a long list of rules for the guidance of the Tramway Company's servants and the public. We don't know who will care to remember all these rules, far less to put them into practice. A motor driver is required to hold a Government certificate of competency. That might not be a very difficult thing. The motor drivers are asked to perform almost impossible tasks. One rule runs thus:—"A clear space of at least 50 feet shall be kept between successive cars, except at stations or turns, unless it may be necessary to approach nearer in order to avoid collision or prevent injury." It is interesting to speculate on the fate of the motor driver in a law court, who will succeed only in keeping a space of 49 feet between successive cars. What is there in the number 50?

The motor driver holding a certificate of competency can be expected to use his discretion as to the space to be kept between successive cars. Besides, as the contingency of "approaching nearer to avoid collision" is to arise oftener than has been supposed by the General Committee, the rule is likely to be more observed in the breach than in the observance thereof. We for ourselves do not see the use of such a hard-and-fast rule. The motor man has to regulate the motion of his car with a special eye to the movements of the hackney carriages. Unless the hackney carriage drivers also are asked to keep at a considerable distance from the tram cars, it is useless to seek to bind down the motormen to such rules. We have experienced that sometimes the hackney carriage drivers show a decided tendency to use the tram line. They never pay heed to the repeated request of the passengers to avoid running close to the tram cars. Under these circumstances, it can hardly be expected that the drivers will be able to observe the rule in question. Then, again, in the narrow Calcutta roads, where a well-defined line for other sorts of wheeled traffic has not been laid out, a strict adherence to the following injunction means the suspension of tramway traffic:—"The driver or motorman shall at all times be responsible for seeing that the line is clear of obstruction, and if there is any risk of collision, or the line is in any way obstructed, the car shall be stopped till the line is clear of obstruction." Then, of course, it ought to be clearly defined what is meant by obstruction. If a man happens to be running across the path of the car, is the motorman to construe such a case into an obstruction?

Some of the regulations seem to have been dictated by men who drive in their carriages poring over a book all the while and seldom care to notice what passes in the streets. There are so many orders for stopping the car, that the Corporation, while showing sufficient regard for the life and limb of the passengers, have quite forgotten the fact that the public use the tram cars for the purpose of locomotion. We think it would have been sufficient if to the rule demanding competency from the motor drivers were added the two following and the like:—

"(1) Any person, except a servant of the Company on duty, entering or leaving the car whilst in motion shall be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 20.

"(2) Every car shall halt at fixed stations to be established by the Company, subject to the sanction and approval of the Corporation, in order to admit of passengers entering or alighting."

There is one rule which in ambiguity beats those that have been already noticed:—

"If in connection with such accident, any person receives any serious bodily injury, it shall be the duty of the conductor to make arrangements to send such person to hospital with the least possible delay, unless his friends desire otherwise and agree to take charge of him."

If the conductor omits to make such arrangements, he shall incur a penalty not exceeding Rs. 5, and the Company shall also be liable to a penalty not exceeding Rs. 20."

What arrangements is the conductor to make? Is the car to be at a standstill during the time the conductor is engaged in making such arrangements? Supposing the man had no friends and relations with him and were unconscious or semi-conscious in consequence of any injury received, who is to pay for the arrangement to be made? Has the Committee thought for a time the series of actions that make up that "arrangement"? If no policeman happens to be near, is the conductor to run all the way to find one? Unless the Company can see its way to increase the conducting staff of the running car, we don't know how the intentions of the Corporation are to be given effect to. We heartily thank the Corporation for its laudable solicitude for the safety of the public, but it should have at the same time thought how these rules and regulations are likely to press on the conducting staff. There should have been some practical recommendations. The threats of punishment have been too frequently held out. The Corporation has altogether lost sight of the other side of the question. We doubt if one with the salary of a High Court Judge will care to run the car with so many Damocles' swords hanging over one's head.

26. Referring to the appointment of Mr. D'Cruz as License Officer of the Calcutta Municipality, the *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 22nd August remarks as follows:—

BASUMATI,
Aug. 22nd, 1903.

Appointment of the License Officer of the Calcutta Municipality.

We are not surprised at this appointment. The Calcutta Municipality, as at present constituted, is ready to favour Englishmen and Eurasians. Native gentlemen, however able they may be, have therefore no chance. Mr. D'Cruz has been serving for the last eight years as an officer of the Municipality. But he never served in the License Department, and can therefore have no experience of it. On the other hand, Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose served the Municipality, for the last twenty years, and for the greater part of this long period he served in the License Department. For the last two years he ably officiated as License Officer of the Municipality. But his just claims have been overlooked, and Mr. D'Cruz has been appointed on his getting a majority of votes. But the European element is supreme in the Municipal Committee, and Bengalis are nowhere. Moreover, most of the Bengali Commissioners have neither the courage nor the sense of self-respect, required on such occasions.

27. A correspondent writes to the *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 23rd August to the following effect:—

RANGALAY,
Aug. 23rd, 1903.

Abolition of a charitable dispensary in the Howrah district.

Singti Sibpur, a village in the Hooghly district, is in a deplorable condition owing to the ravages of malaria. The roads of the village are impassable during the rainy season. The charitable dispensary in the village was at one time very useful, but unfortunately it has been abolished. It was associated with the name of Mr. Duke, the late Magistrate of Howrah, and it is a great misfortune that the name of such a worthy officer should be allowed to be forgotten. Babu Umes Chandra Banerji, the Secretary to the dispensary, collected subscriptions from the villagers in aid of the dispensary, and Government also subsidised it from the beginning. We are quite in the dark as to why the dispensary has been abolished, although in receipt of so much help. The Secretary was written to several times on this subject, but he gave no reply to our letters. He should give a satisfactory explanation of all the circumstances connected with the abolition of the dispensary.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

28. A correspondent of the *Bangabhumi* [Calcutta] of the 18th August complains of the extremely bad condition of the road in the southern quarter of the Joynagar Durgapore village in the 24-Parganas district. Every year the Local Board assigns Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 for its repair, but most part of the money goes to the pocket of the contractor. The Aurvedic Dispensary of Kaviraj Anukulchandra Chatterji, which stands on this road, is every day resorted to by hundreds of patients, and to these people the bad condition of the road causes the greatest hardship. The attention of the District Board is drawn to the matter.

BANGA BHUMI,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

A bad road in the 24-Parganas.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

29. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 19th August complains that there are no second class carriages for ladies in the up and down local trains between Howrah and

A railway complaint.

Midnapore. This causes great inconvenience. Considering the frequency of outrages upon native ladies in railway carriages, second class carriages for ladies ought to be provided in local trains, as is done in the Bombay and Madras mail trains. The Bengal-Nagpur Railway authorities will, it is hoped, remove this inconvenience.

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 20th, 1903.

30. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 20th August has the following in its English columns:—

The report of the Irrigation Commission.

A summary of the report of the Irrigation Commission has appeared in the newspapers.

Ours being a country where famine has come to be almost an annual visitant, anything that promises to be of any use in mitigating the rigour of famine in the land is specially welcome. We looked into the summary for the opinions of the Commissioners about the value of irrigation as a protective measure. But in the condensed newspaper reports nothing under such a heading could be found. Towards the conclusion we come across the following passages:—
“The whole of India can never be protected from famine by irrigation alone, but irrigation can do much to restrict the area and to mitigate the intensity of famine.” This is a commonplace for which no experts need rack their heads nor waste their valuable time. That no measure can purchase complete immunity from an evil for which any remedy is sought is a truism which should have found no place in a report which, to say the least of it, must not be academic. Then the Commissioners go a little out of their way and repeat the wise warning of the last Famine Commission about the necessity of a spirit of self-help amongst the people. The last sentence of the summary which appears in a certain paper refers to the necessity of developing a practice of thrift amongst the people. Had it not been very significant of an official prejudice regarding the existence of a chronic famine in the land, we would have gladly made allowance for such incidental aberrations in such a bulky report. In season and out of season the Government will harp upon the old theory of want of thrift amongst the people being the cause of a perennial famine in the country. We don't of course belong to the school that will not see any shortcomings of their countrymen. We know that our people are a little improvident, that they have not got enough of strength of mind to rise above the tyranny of absurd and mischievous social customs. But it should be pointed out that the habits of the people only operate at a later stage and make it difficult for them to get over the emergency. They cannot be said to be the cause of famine in the land. If the people are not in the habit of laying by for the rainy days, it can be safely said that their improvidence will aggravate their sufferings. But be they thrifty or prodigal, the rainy days will come all the same. The Irrigation Commission was appointed to discuss the scope and purpose of irrigation as a famine preventive measure. In a country where periodic drought is a well recognised natural phenomenon, can any artificial measure make up for the deficiency of rainfall? The question put in a nutshell comes to that. But we cannot say, until the full report reaches our hands, what light the Commissioners have thrown on that fundamental question.

There is a certain sentence embodying both a statement of fact and an opinion, which runs thus:—“The character of the rainfall and soil, and physical configuration, etc., impose many limitations, and the conclusions are that in many tracts the utmost possible area of available supplies will fail to afford complete protection against famine, and that a volume of unused rainfall offers no index of the probabilities of extending irrigation.” We remember to have read a certain letter written by an expert, in which the defects of the modern irrigation works, which help wastage, were pointed out. We have not been told in the report under review if the character of soil, and other impediments cannot be provided against by higher scientific skill.

The Commission has also discussed the question how far the State is justified in constructing purely protective works yielding no return. And the conclusion is that where security is attainable, an outlay equal to three times the famine expenditure is justifiable. Why the outlay for irrigation should

bear that particular proportion to the famine expenditure has not been very explicitly set forth in the report. The way in which the charge of protecting areas by irrigation has been estimated is not also readily intelligible to the lay mind. The Commission has put forward a 20 years' programme involving the expenditure of 44 crores for irrigation. Of this, nearly 20 crores, chiefly in Madras and Bombay, would be unproductive, while the productive outlay would be chiefly in the Punjab. The annual net charge to revenue would be 73½ lakhs.

The Commission has suggested the creation of a Central Board for giving effect to their recommendations. The popular impression is that when the authorities are for suspending all work in a certain department and stifling all the enquiries regarding the same, they give a sop to the public by appointing a Commission. But the creation of the Central Board will put an end to such malicious criticisms.

31. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August says

HITAVADI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

A case of outrage on female modesty by a railway servant.

that on the night of the 26th July last, a certain Abdul Gani and his wife, Sukkan Bibi, were sleeping on the verandah of the railway station house at Tinpahar on the East Indian Railway, when B. L. Haldar, the Second Assistant Station Master of the station, tried to outrage the modesty of Sukkan Bibi. The rogue was, however, caught by the woman and her husband, and has been fined Rs. 50 in a law-court. Considering the gravity of the offence committed, the punishment has been very light. What does the Railway Company mean to do with him? Will he be kept in service and will his Provident Fund money be paid to him? The Home Board of the Company is requested to enquire into the matter, because there is no hope of getting justice from the Agent. The correspondent also says that some time ago a doctor *sahab* of the railway used to have cooly women forcibly taken to his bungalow at night. The Divisional Medical Officer of the railway requested the Agent to dismiss him, but the latter asked him to resign. This shows that justice cannot be expected from the Agent in cases of outrage against female modesty.

32. Babu Ramesh Chandra Mitra, No. 56, Sitaram Ghosh's Street, Calcutta,

HITAVADI.

Complaints against the Kalna steamer servants.

writes to the same paper that the arbitrary and high-handed conduct of the *khalasis* and *serangs* of the steamers of the Kalna line has become a source of great inconvenience, hardship, and trouble to their passengers. At the stations sudden motion is given to the steamers. The correspondent has on many occasions saved women from falling down on account of the sudden jerk thus occasioned. The decks of the steamers are much higher than those of the boats which bring passengers to them. A small staircase can remove this inconvenience, but the Steamer Company will not provide one. Narrow wooden planks are provided for the alighting of passengers at certain stations. The difficulty of passing over these planks is very great, especially when the steamers undulate. Passengers often fall into the river, and the *serangs* and *khalasis* enjoy the scene. The rule is that railings should be held fast with bamboos when female passengers alight, but this is seldom done. The screens, with which enclosures for second class female passengers are formed, are seldom properly tied, so that they fly about whenever the wind is high. Besides this, the *khalasis* are found to move about these enclosures rather too often. The steamer servants amuse themselves in a very obscene manner with prostitute passengers in the presence of the other passengers. There are two first class cabins in each of the steamers, but one of them is occupied by the *serang* and another by the conductor, and they are never placed at the disposal of native first class passengers. Passengers are not allowed to use the steamer screens in rain. The steamer coolies charge exorbitant fees for carrying luggage, and sometimes abuse passengers for refusing to pay such high fees. On the other hand, the *serangs* do not allow coolies from outside to do the work.

33. The same paper publishes the following railway complaints:—

HITAVADI.

Railway complaints.

(1) A correspondent complains of the want of a good waiting-room in the Devipur station on the East Indian Railway, the one now existing being unable to accommodate

more than eight or nine people. The want of an overbridge also is a source of great inconvenience to passengers.

(2) Babu Manindra Nath Mitra, Bagnan, Howrah district, says that, at the Howrah station on the East Indian Railway, the booking-office for intermediate class passengers is opened only a few minutes before the starting of trains. This causes great inconvenience to inter-class passengers, especially to those among them who travel with females and have luggage to book. The waiting-room for third class female passengers is wholly uncared for, and so very filthy as to be absolutely unfit for use.

(3) A correspondent complains of the want of a waiting-room for females in the Sitarampur station on the East Indian Railway. This want can be removed by constructing a waiting-room on the up platform of the Jheria Branch line. There is a signalling cabin on the overbridge at the station, and the European officers working there take their stand on it at train time. This causes great inconvenience to respectable female passengers passing over it. The want of a separate compartment for inter-class native female passengers in the trains on the Jheria Branch line is keenly felt. At the Raniganj station the want of benches for third and inter-class male passengers on the up platform and of a waiting-room for native females is the source of great inconvenience to them. There is a big room for male passengers which is divided into two parts by railings. One of these compartments can be turned into a waiting-room for females by erecting a wall in place of the railings. The want of an overbridge, platforms, waiting rooms, and latrines at the Kalipahari station has long been a cause of complaint with passengers, but the railway authorities appear to be determined not to remove it.

RANGALAY,
Aug. 23rd, 1903.

34. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 23rd August writes as follows:—

The Irrigation Commission.

The Irrigation Commission is unanimous in its opinion that "the whole of India can never be protected by irrigation from famine, but it can restrict and mitigate the intensity of famine." Are we then to understand that famine must ever remain a constant companion of India? Cannot even such a Viceroy as Lord Curzon discover any effective means of stamping out famine? If it is a fact that self-preservation is the strongest instinct in all creatures, how is it that our people do not shake off their apathy and look around? Corn grows in abundance in our country; but how is it spirited away?

As an outcome of the Irrigation Commission, a few appointments are going to be created, none of which of course will fall to the lot of the Indians. A Central Board will be formed, and an Inspector will be appointed who will advise in matters of irrigation. All this no doubt means that more money will be spent from the Indian Treasury to afford means of livelihood to a few more Englishmen. But we can have nothing to say in this connexion. All our protests, exhortations, wallings are sure to be ignored.

HITAVARTA,
Aug. 23rd, 1903.

35. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 23rd August has the following:—

Outrage on female modesty on railways.

It is a regret that violation of female modesty should be of frequent occurrence on the railways in spite of repeated complaints in the native Press against such brutal conduct. The Railways Commission has made some very severe reflections on such conduct of the railway employes, but no step has yet been taken by the railway authorities to remove the scandal. In the case in which B. L. Halder, the Second Assistant Station Master, was charged with having attempted to outrage the chastity of a woman on the platform of the Tinpahar station, the accused was let off with a fine of Rs. 50. We have frequently brought cases of a similar nature to the notice of the Railway Agents with the view that some stringent measures might be taken for saving the honour of female passengers, but up to the present moment those authorities have not directed their attention to our complaints. We, therefore, appeal to the Head of the Railway Department in England in the fervent hope that he will redress our grievances.

HITAVARTA.

36. The same paper is sorry that to the interpellation made by the

Thefts by railway servants.

Hon'ble Serajul Islam in the Bengal Legislative Council, drawing the attention of Government to the frequency of thefts of goods committed by the railway employes, the

Hon'ble Mr. Inglis replied that unless some specific instances were mentioned by the Hon'ble Member, Government could do nothing in the matter. A goodly number of such cases are published every week in the native papers, and we think they are translated by the Bengali Translator for insertion in his Weekly Report. Government could have collected such cases from that Report if it had a mind to take steps against such thefts. Mr. Inglis's reply perhaps means that Government does not care about such a matter as theft of goods by railway employes.

37. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 21th August writes as follows:—

Reclamation of the beels in Bengal.

Before commenting on the state of agriculture in famine-stricken India generally, and in Bengal in particular, it would be well to give an exact statement of the State expenditure on agriculture in several independent Kingdoms as well as an approximate statement of the area lying uncultivated in the several marshes and beels in Bengal:—

Statement of agricultural expenditure.

Name of Kingdom.	Amount of expenditure.
Denmark	30 lakhs.
Sweden	52½ "
Italy	90 "
The United States	1 crore and 20 lakhs.
Austria	247 " 50 "
Hungary	255 crores.
Russia	600 "

Small Denmark has a population not exceeding 25 lakhs, and yet its annual agricultural expenditure is 30 lakhs per year, while the Government of India considers an annual expenditure of 10 lakhs for the benefit of 180 to 200 millions of agriculturists to be quite sufficient.

Approximate statement of uncultivated area.

District.	Name of beel.	Area in bighas.
Dacca ...	Ainral beel ...	25,000
	Kaliganj " ...	5,000
	Kotalipara " ...	5,000
Faridpur ...	Dhanui " ...	5,000
	Beel in the Telihati pargana ...	8,000 to 10,000
Sylhet ...	Sunan and Habiganj beels and the Pudmaban marsh at Jalaganda ...	25,000
Rajshahi ...	Chalan beel ...	25,000
Noakhali ...	Amrabad " ...	2,000
	Inuhar " at Barisal... ..	200
Backergunge ...	Banua " ...	3,000
	Tarabunia " ...	2,000
Tippera ...	Kubir " ...	3,000
	Nabinagar " ...	2,000
	Beel Pukuria ...	1,500
Mymensingh ...	Begumbari beel ...	10,000
	Kendua " ...	1,500
	Markandeya " ...	10,000
	Gajaniya " ...	2,000
	Halda " ...	1,000
Khulna ...	Hendalkanda " ...	1,000
	Kharera " ...	5,000
	Patna " ...	10,000
	Banya and Kunchemora beels ...	10,000
	Durbadanga and Gunna " ...	Not known.
24-Parganas ...	Dantibhanga beel ...	"
	Balli " ...	Partly reclaimed by Government.

These areas, as we have stated above, are but approximate areas. The exact areas may be learnt on a reference to the *thakbast* departments of the Collectorates and the survey papers of the zamindars.

If, like the foreign Kingdoms mentioned above, the Government of India had induced the zamindars, by a liberal payment, to excavate canals through

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these *beels* and connect those canals with neighbouring rivers, then these waste regions would have been, by this time, filled up by the deposit of silt carried by those rivers, and thus converted into fertile and smiling areas and supplied many hundreds of thousands of people with food.

These *beels* are now covered with plants and reeds which breed swarms of malaria-gnats and are the haunts of venomous snakes, wild boars, and tigers. Government and the zamindars are not, however, slow to lease such lands on the margins of these *beels* as are being formed by a natural process.

Among the Commissions proposed to be appointed by Lord Curzon, the Irrigation Commission will be one of the most important. We therefore acquaint Government with the condition of the rivers and *beels* in Bengal before the Commission has commenced its enquiry. In all matters, great and small, we remain content with stating our grievances, leaving the remedy in the hands of Government, and we do not know why the acute Engineers of Government are making such a difficulty of the deepening of the channel of the Bhagirathi and the removal of the sand carried by the two small rivers, the Ajay and the Mayurakshi.

A task comparatively so simple should present no serious difficulty to English Engineers who can boast of such engineering feats as the Orissa Coast Canal, the High Level Canal, the Eden Canal, the Sone Canal, the Gailkura Tunnel, the road up the Himalayas to Tibet, and the road to Somaliland.

(h)—General.

BHARAT MITRA,
Aug. 15th, 1903.

38. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 15th August is sorry that Mr. K. G. Gupta, Commissioner of Orissa, though a Hindu, has passed an order so opposed to the interests of that religion. He has prohibited processions with music within a quarter of a mile of a Christian church, knowing full well that music forms a principal part of most Hindu religious rites and ceremonies.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

39. Referring to the circular which is said to have been recently issued by the Commissioner of Orissa prohibiting Hindu music within a quarter of a mile of Christian churches in Cuttack town, the *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 19th August writes as follows:—

We are at a loss to make out what has led Mr. K. G. Gupta, whose hair has become grey in the service of Government, to adopt this curious administrative policy. Does not Mr. Gupta, who is born of Hindu parents, know that his circular will have the effect of seriously interfering with Hindu religious festivities, many of which cannot be performed without music? Mr. Gupta's circular amounts to this. A is a Vaishnav, and music is an essential accompaniment of his devotions. B, a Christian, builds a cottage next to A's house and calls it a church. A must thenceforward put a stop to all sacred music in his house. Again, has not Mr. Gupta bound himself by the circular to issue similar prohibitory circulars in favour of mosques if he is requested by Musalmans to do so? In short, a wide application of the worthy Commissioner's policy will have the effect of depriving Hindu religious festivities of one of their essential features throughout the country. Would Mr. Gupta dare do for Hindus what he has done for Christians, if the Hindu inhabitants of a place with a dominant Christian population were to object to Christian religious music near their *mandirs*? If Mr. Gupta's circular had purported to prohibit Hindu music near Christian churches only in times of prayer, there would have been some justification for it. But by making the prohibition work for all time, he has shown a singular solicitude to ensure the comfort of Christian wardens. He ought to have consulted the Lieutenant-Governor before issuing the circular, just as he consulted His Honour in deciding the quarrel between Mr. M. S. Das and Messrs. Schurr and Fisher.

Most probably the Hindu inhabitants of Cuttack town have by this time approached His Honour with a petition, and it is hoped that His Honour will earn the gratitude of the Hindu community by annulling Mr. Gupta's unjust circular.

PALLIVASI,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

40. The *Pallivasi* [Kalna] of the 19th August, says that Mr. K. G. Gupta, Commissioner of the Orissa Division, has recently issued an order to the effect that on Hindu

procession with music will be allowed to pass within a quarter of a mile of a Christian church in Cuttack. It is inexplicable why Mr. Gupta should in this manner wound the feelings of the Hindus. Nor are the Christian gentlemen justified in thus demanding a privilege which cannot fail to give great pain to the Hindus. Government should no longer remain indifferent in such matters, which bid fair to outstrip the Muhammadans in their oppressions upon Hindus.

41. We do not know, says the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August, what has led the Commissioner of Orissa to promulgate, all of a sudden, an order prohibiting Hindu music within a quarter of a mile of a Christian church in Cuttack town. A prohibition of Hindu music only at times of prayer and service in churches might have been made with some reason, but a broad order, unlimited as regards time, such as has been issued by Mr. K. G. Gupta, appears to be an injustice done to Hindus.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

42. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd August writes as follows:—
The Secretary of State for India in his last Budget speech said that he expected even a larger surplus this year than he at first expected in the hands of the Government of India. But there is absolutely no ground for this optimistic forecast. On the contrary, the continual presence of some calamity or other, such as famine, flood, drought, etc., in one or other part of India, points to a very different conclusion. The food-stuffs are gradually becoming dearer; the avenues to the earning of money are daily growing narrower; the native arts are fast becoming extinct. Under such circumstances it cannot be said that the country is prospering, nor can a surplus in the treasury be indicative of the country's prosperity. We see before our eyes every day how the people are faring, and no amount of argument on paper can alter the actual conditions. Yet in the midst of this ever-increasing poverty, there is a surplus in the treasury!

BANGAVASI,
Aug. 22nd, 1903.

Again, His Lordship has said that copious rains have fallen all over India, and consequently there is no longer any fear of a destruction of crops. The display of such ignorance by one who ought to have known better, who rules the destinies of the millions of India, is simply astounding. The continued drought of the last two months and a half has destroyed the crops in many places. In many fields the seedlings have not at all come out. The rains of the last few days will do some good to the crops in the low lands; but they, too, will all die away if a period of drought should recur. The nature of the harvest cannot be predicted if it rains only for a few days in the year. And even if there be regular showers up to the month of *Agrahayana*, a full outturn cannot be expected on those lands. Again, if floods come by the end of *Bhadra* or in the beginning of *Asvin*, there will be danger of the crops being totally destroyed. Yet in the face of these possible causes of destruction of the crops, Lord George Hamilton is sanguine about a full harvest!

Speaking in support of Mr. Brodrick's proposal to place a portion of the cost of the South African garrison upon India, His Lordship expressed displeasure against the native newspapers of India, all of which opposed the proposal. But all the Anglo-Indian papers, too, were unanimous in their opposition to Mr. Brodrick's proposal. And even in the House of Lords, Lord Ripon and many other distinguished persons exposed the unsoundness of the proposal, and in the Commons many a member severely criticised it. Yet the Secretary of State has charged only the native papers of this country with exaggeration. This injustice on His Lordship's part has given a rude shock to the sensibilities of many people in India.

III.—LEGISLATION.

43. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 18th August writes as follows:—

CHARU MIHIR,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

The Bengal Settled Estates Bill.

The policy which tends to confine wealth in the hands of one individual, as the Bengal Settled Estates Bill proposes to do, is opposed to the first principles of the modern science of Political Economy. In all countries the middle classes form the backbone of society. This middle class gains its strength in two ways—*first*, by the increase of wealth in the lower classes; *secondly*, by the division of

large estates. The peculiar circumstances and the sense of justice obtaining in our country repel the idea that the eldest son of a zamindar should be a millionaire, and the other sons should be beggars. The political and social status of a country improve in proportion as the number of its well-to-do middle class men increases.

Those who are in possession of large estates, are, from a variety of causes, mere puppets in the hands of the Government officers. They are, in a much greater degree than middle class people, influenced by the pleasure or displeasure of Government. How many among them have dared to join the National Congress? Those who will inherit their estates under the provisions of the new law, will be completely under Government control in all matters. Are our zamindars so foolish as not to be awakened to a sense of their future helplessness even by witnessing the wretched condition of the feudatory Chiefs? What good will accrue to this unfortunate country by creating a number of zamindars as miserably circumstanced as the feudatories? We are of opinion that the proposed law will do more harm than good to the country.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

44. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 19th August is glad that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal desires to consult the Government of India before passing the Bengal Settled Estates Bill. It is not just to pass such an important measure without consulting every possible source of information and advice. There are many points in the Bill which require discussion. It is hoped that the Government of India will consider all the arguments, *pro* and *con*, before giving its decision. The Bill contains many provisions opposed to the Hindu and the Muhammadan law.

PALLIVASI,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

45. The *Pallivasi* [Kalna] of the 19th August remarks that the Hon'ble Mr. Buckland has said that it was at the instance of the Government of India that the clause in the Bengal Settled Estates Bill requiring the payment of one-fourth of the net income of zamindaris as fee, was inserted. It is said that the Government of India will refuse to accord its assent to the Bill, if it is passed without this provision. It is a disgrace that Lord Curzon should countenance a proposal which is calculated to bring in handsome profits to Government even in administrative matters like these. It would be most cruel to destroy when avowedly engaged to save. It is to be hoped that Government will no longer stick to such an unjust proposal.

ANUSANDHAN,
Aug. 26th, 1903.

46. Referring to the Bengal Settled Estates Bill, the *Anusandhan* [Calcutta] of the 26th August remarks as follows:—
The Bengal Settled Estates Bill. The eldest son will under the provisions of the Bengal Settled Estates Bill inherit the entire property of the father and the other sons will get nothing! What an inhuman proposal has been made in this land of Hindus, whose chief characteristic is tender affection! Not only is the proposed law inhuman, but it is positively destructive of religion. For what object does a Hindu father wish sons to be born to him? The *Shastras* say, "A wife is taken in order to get a son, and a son is required for the sake of the *pinda*." Again, "it is because the son delivers the father from the hell called *put*, that he is called *puttra* by Brahma himself." All the Hindu codes unanimously give this character to the sons. All the sons are equally bound to perform the obsequies of their father, and hence it has been laid down that they are equally entitled to their father's property. And this custom has prevailed in this country from time immemorial and it has been considered inviolable. Where a son is disinherited by the father, he is not entitled to perform the ceremonies which should be performed after the death of his father. A father wishes for more sons than one, for the reason that if one or other among them be incapable of performing the ceremonies, the remaining sons may be able to do so. By depriving the younger sons of their father's property the law would also make them incapable of performing those all-important ceremonies. Will not Government then destroy the fundamental relationship existing between the father and his sons in Hindu society? What can be more mortifying to a Hindu father than

the prospect of being deprived, after his death, of the *pindas* and offerings of water?

It can by no means be affirmed that there are not those who suspect that in proposing this law, Government is actuated by extremely sinister motives. Where property is possessed by a single individual, he alone remains in affluent circumstances, and the other persons are reduced to penury. Possibly that is the object Government has in view. The few Rajas and zamindars in our country are entirely dependent on Government, and they will remain such for ever. Government probably wishes that it should be so. Where property is divided, many people become powerful, and it is not then easy to keep them all under perfect control. It may also be that Government is for this reason so eager to pass the Bill. If so, it is the most unjust and disgraceful object that Government can have in view. It would be an unworthy act on the part of Government to impute unfair motives to the loyal people of India.

There are still many zamindars in Bengal having more sons than one who have not yet eschewed all faith in Hindu customs. There are also some Pandits well versed in the *Shastras*. It is to be hoped Government will consult these zamindars and Pandits before passing the Bill.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

47. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 18th August says that copious rain fell last week in the Mymensingh district. It will do much good to the transplanted paddy, but the damage already done by the long drought has no chance of being repaired. It is feared that a full harvest has little chance of being reaped this year.

CHARU MIHIR,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

48. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 19th August writes as follows:—

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

The Emperor and the Secretary of State on the prospects of the crops in India.

The highest officials try to present before the world a bright enchanting picture of India's prosperity, keeping behind the screen the dark and dismal aspect on which are depicted her miseries and misfortunes. This may, for the time being, lend an appearance of excellence to the administration of the country; but truth immaculate never remains concealed for a long time, and sometimes through the influence of some great unknown agency it shoots forth before the world's eye from behind the screen. For the last two months, signs of distress have been visible in every part of the country. Trustworthy reports have been reaching us that in none of the districts of Midnapore, Murshidabad, Mymensingh, Bankura, etc., districts which are well-known for their fertility, has there been good cultivation owing to severe drought, whilst in many places the work of transplantation has not even commenced. The report went to London, and the English people feared that there would be a great famine in India. Meanwhile, however, there were a few showers here and there, and the news was at once telegraphed to London, and with equal haste, the Secretary of State for India, nay, the Emperor himself, announced with great glee that there was no longer any fear of famine in India, that the rainfall had been sufficient, and that the prospect before the crops was bright. It need hardly be said, however, that there is no ground as yet for expressing so much satisfaction. The distress is still as severe as before in most places, where the poor cultivators are in vain waiting for a shower.

We do not exaggerate. According to the official reports themselves, there has been rainfall in 5 out of 25 districts in Bengal Proper, in 3 out of 12 districts in Bihar, in 2 out of 4 districts in Orissa, and in only 1 district in Chota Nagpur.

49. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* [Murshidabad] of the 19th August says that the condition is alarming all round, and famine seems imminent on account of the failure of the rains. Some good will result from the showers that fell last week. The season is now too far advanced, and even copious showers can do little good. Coarse rice is selling at many places at 8 to 10 seers per rupee. Government ought to make preparations for the preservation of the lives of the people.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHINI,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

Prospect of famine in Bengal.

MEDINI BANDHAY,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

50. A correspondent from Kesiari writes to the *Medini Bandab* [Midnapore] of the 19th August as follows:—

A relief measure proposed for a place in the Midnapore district.

People in these parts are badly in want of roads and good drinking water. A road from Belda to Kesiari was long ago proposed. If the construction of the road be commenced now, the labourers will be really benefited thereby in their present distress.

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PRATIVASI,
Aug. 21st, 1903.

51. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August writes as follows:—

Famine certain.

There is no longer any hope of reaping a good harvest in India. It is August, and there is no rainfall. Still many people, who know nothing of agriculture in the country, think that a good paddy harvest may yet be reaped if there be rainfall, and probably a few agricultural and district officials have led the Government to entertain the same view. The superstitious Bengali cultivator is still looking up at the skies in the hope of reaping a late harvest. But they are all mistaken. There can be no *aus* or autumnal crop without timely showers. This is the harvest time for the *aus* crop, and the time from *Agrahayan* to *Magh* is the time for reaping the autumnal crop. It is doubtful whether there will be a 4-anna crop in Bengal this year. Famine is therefore certain.

Already distress is being severely felt by the bulk of the people. We are a subject people, so that even if we die of starvation, we shall not curse anybody, but only go on praying to God. The memory of devastating famines in Orissa, Bihar, the United Provinces, etc., has made us extremely uneasy, and so on the eve of another famine we seek the protection of our Government with tears in our eyes.

The following measures should be adopted at this crisis:—

- (1) Prohibiting exports of rice, pulses, flour, wheat, etc.
- (2) Compelling mufassal zamindars and *mahajans* to sell all surplus stocks of food-grains, keeping only such quantities thereof as may be required for local consumption in the districts in which they live.
- (3) Fixing the prices of food-grains in every district.
- (4) Placing the management of these matters in the hands of able, honest, and impartial Collectors, Deputy Collectors, Municipal Chairmen, zamindars, etc., and not in the hands of the police.

BANKURA DARPAN,
Aug. 23rd, 1903.

52. The *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 23rd August publishes the following from correspondents:—

Distress in the Bankura district.

Isabpur, Methra, Sonamukhi, Bankura.—For want of rain, the autumnal paddy could not be cultivated and the *aus* paddy has been destroyed. In spite of the help rendered by the Mandal zamindars of Hadal Narayanpur, the poor people are suffering great hardships. Even some respectable families are in great difficulty. In the midst of these sufferings, the oppressiveness of the *chaukidari-tax* is quite intolerable.

Dhan Simla.—There have been occasional showers during the last week, and the cultivators are proceeding with their work with the help of 4 or 5 rupees received by them from the Sub-Deputy Magistrate. The condition of the peasant class is a little better than before. Many among the labourer classes have left the place, and those that remain are maintaining themselves with the greatest difficulty by selling fire-wood. Their pitiable condition deserves the kind attention of Government.

Virsingha.—The greater part of the inhabitants of this place are weavers. Their profession has greatly declined, and most of them are in consequence suffering hardships. The condition of the poorer classes defy description. These people are obliged to pass their days often without food, or have to be satisfied with only one meal a day. Only a three-eighth part of the land has been cultivated. The remaining five-eighths have no chance of being cultivated for want of the cost of cultivation.

53. A correspondent from Nandigram writes to the *Nihar* [Contai] of the 25th August as follows:—

NIHAR,
Aug. 25th, 1903.

Distress in the Midnapore district.

Gumgarh has been reduced to its last extremity. The Raja Bahadur of that place was informed of the miserable condition of his tenants, and he promised to help them. In the midst of their misery the oppressions of the *chaukidari-tax*

collectors and of the Raja Bahadur's men have become intolerable. But the Raja has not yet fulfilled his promise. Many persons are dying of starvation. Rice is selling at 8 or 9 seers per rupee, and paddy at Rs. 2-6 per maund. Cultivation has suffered for want of rain. The health of the place is daily becoming worse. Thefts and dacoities are on the increase.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

54. The *Hindi Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 17th August is glad that the people of Europe have conferred upon His Majesty King Edward VII of England the title of Peacemaker—a title which he really deserves. In his speech from the Throne of the 14th instant, he said that his visit to Spain, Portugal, and France had been fruitful of immense good, that he would try his best to bring about a better understanding between Russia and Turkey, and that he had effected a commercial treaty with Persia. The empire of a ruler who is so much eager for the general welfare of humankind, will undoubtedly be firm and wide.

HINDI BANGAVASI,
Aug. 17th, 1903.

55. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 20th August writes as follows:—

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 20th, 1903.

Lord George Hamilton's friendship for India.

Lord George Hamilton, who is fattened on Indian wealth, gave his assent to Mr. Brodrick's proposal to saddle India with a portion of the cost of the South African contingent, but thanks to Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener, the War Minister has been obliged to withdraw his proposal. During the debate on the subject in the House of Commons, Lord George Hamilton said that he deprecated the strong language of some of the members, which, with the highly-coloured comments of the Native Press, were calculated to create the impression that the Imperial Government intended to impose on India charges which the Imperial Government ought to bear. Such a statement, he continued, was absolutely unjustifiable. If the South African proposal was abandoned, some future Government of India would have to increase the permanent garrison. It was because he favoured economy by keeping down India's military expenditure that he had assented to the proposal of the Government for negotiating a subsidy and agreement with the Amir similar to the agreement with his father. He would do his utmost to secure the amelioration of the condition of the Indians already in South Africa, and, unless improvement was guaranteed, he would not sanction any proposals encouraging immigration.

Enough of Lord George Hamilton's professions of friendship for India. We have had ample experience of it. Does not His Lordship know that India's safety does not depend on an increase of her military strength? What fear of Russia so long as 300 millions of Indians are alive? Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener know fully well that an additional garrison is not at all required in India, and have therefore protested against Mr. Brodrick's proposal.

56. Referring to the Maharaja of Benares's ivory furniture affair, the same paper writes as follows:—

The ivory furniture affair.

Mrs. Smeaton's letter, written to the *Daily News*, reminds us of the days of Warren Hastings. She has brought a serious charge against Lord Curzon. We know that there is no Burke in England now, and yet we believe that Lord George Hamilton's unsatisfactory reply to Mr. MacNeill's question on the subject will not be accepted as sufficient. His Lordship said: "The suite of furniture was lying in an unoccupied house in a dilapidated condition. The Viceroy having ascertained that the Maharaja took no interest in it, offered to buy it." What led His Excellency to visit the "unoccupied house" at all? Mrs. Smeaton says that the suite of furniture lay in the state-room of the Maharaja's guest-house. Does it become the representative of the Sovereign to covet things belonging to a Maharaja? Does not Lord Curzon, who possesses superior intelligence, know what is meant by an offer, made by him, to buy a Maharaja's things? Lord Curzon has set a very bad and injurious example to his subordinate high officials in India. It will not look well for His Excellency's conduct to be criticised in every Native State and by every Indian. He ought not to remain in India after the publication of this scandal.

SANJIVANI.

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 20th, 1903.

57. The same paper writes as follows:—

The Indian Association's Agent
in Assam.

Some time ago the Indian Association, Calcutta, deputed its Assistant Secretary, Babu Dwijendranath Basu, to enquire into the Raumari tea-garden riot case. The *Bengalee* newspaper of the 12th August last contained a telegram from Dibrugarh to the effect that Dwijendra Babu had, by secret enquiries among the garden coolies, come to know much about the garden-manager's (Mr. Lane's) treatment of them. This led the organ of the tea-planting community, the *Englishman* newspaper, vigorously to protest against such secret enquiries. The *Bengalee* has been cowed down, and its editor, Mr. Surendranath Banerji, who is also the Secretary to the Indian Association, has, in reply to the *Englishman*, said that the Association itself does not approve of such secret enquiries, and that its Secretary protested against Dwijendra Babu's conduct and warned him for the future. Now, the work for which Dwijendra Babu is in Assam has not yet been finished, and he has not yet submitted his report to the Indian Association. Under such circumstances, the *Bengalee* was wrong in publishing the telegram without taking the opinion and sanction of the Association in the matter. By this injudicious action it has made itself ridiculous and placed Dwijendra Babu in a false and dangerous position. Was Dwijendra Babu instructed not to make secret enquiries? Many people know that on many previous occasions the Indian Association had to make secret enquiries. How could Dwijendra Babu then know that on the present occasion the Association would not approve of similar enquiries being made? Again, we are at a loss to make out what fault he has committed by making secret enquiries. Many tales of brutal oppression and many hard truths would never have been known to the world except for secret enquiries. It was by means of secret enquiries that the great opponents of the slave trade brought to light many of the misdoings of slave traders. When the Opium Commission sat in Calcutta, one of its members, Mr. Wilson, M.P., visited many opium dens *incognito*. And had it not been for such secret enquiries, he would never have been able to prepare the strong report for which every Indian is grateful to him. How is it possible to know the real condition of a set of people who are completely at the mercy of a powerful master, except by means of secret enquiries? Dwijendra Babu began his enquiries with a noble object, and he ought to be thanked by the Indian Association.

SANJIVANI.

58. The same paper writes as follows:—

The Emperor on India.

It is a matter of the greatest regret that in his last speech from the Throne—speeches from the Throne are always prepared by Ministers—the Emperor has said that the Indians are happy and prosperous, and that sufficient rainfall has brightened the prospects of the crops in India. India is groaning under severe calamities, the vitality of her children is being sapped by famine and distress, lakhs of people are meeting with untimely death, and the whole country is being oppressed by heavy taxation, and yet the Emperor says that the Indians are happy. Official reports say that there has not been even half the usual rainfall in the extensive region between Calcutta and Lahore, but still the Emperor says that the prospects of the crops are bright. Had it not been for the Ministers, our Sovereign, who has given unmistakable evidence of the largeness and generosity of his heart in Ireland, would never have made so great a mistake.

HITAVADI,
Aug 21st, 1903.

59. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 21st August says

Proceedings in connection with
the surplus of the Bogra Corona-
tion fund.

that Mr. Williams, the new Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division, is not in favour of the proposal of constructing a rest-house in Bogra town with the surplus of the local Coronation fund, but the District Magistrate and his pack of sycophants are trying their best to carry out the idea. Nor is this all. Many innocent people are being persecuted on the suspicion that they write articles on the subject in the newspapers. Recently the Inspector in charge of the Kotwali thana threatened a pleader on this suspicion. The pleader spoke to the District Magistrate about the Inspector's conduct towards him, but the Magistrate said: "Inspector Babu has told me that you write in newspapers, and that is also my belief. I shall enquire whether it is true or not." Nothing further has, however, been done

in the matter. People believe that the police is doing all this at the instigation of the Magistrate.

The editor draws the attention of the authorities and especially that of the Divisional Commissioner to this matter, and requests them to prevent the district authorities from persecuting innocent people with a view of hiding their own wrong actions. Oppression will greatly increase if the District Magistrate gives indulgence to the police, and bad people will make use of this opportunity of being avenged on their enemies.

60. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd August writes as follows:—

A golden deed done by Mr. Stevenson-Moore.

While returning to Calcutta from Naihati in his steam-launch, Mr. Stevenson-Moore, District Magistrate of the 24-Parganas, noticed that a man was floating down the river near Kamarhati. He at once jumped into the river, swam to the man, and raised him upon the launch. By careful nursing the Magistrate succeeded in bringing him round. On being questioned, the man, who was an old Hindusthani, named the steamer from which he had fallen. The Magistrate then overtook the steamer near Nimtolla Ghat, went on board and made enquiries, and ordered the police to make further enquiry. Whatever the result of the enquiry may be, the news that a poor man's life has been saved by the kindness of the Magistrate, is enough to fill one with joy.

BANGAVASI,
Aug. 22nd, 1903.

61. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 23rd August is sorry that the House

Want of an official member to represent India in the House of Lords.

of Lords has no official member in it to represent India. When any Indian question is, therefore, raised, that House has to depend for information with reference thereto upon some irresponsible unofficial member. India is not a plaything, and Indian questions ought not to be dealt with in a careless manner. For India no misfortune can be greater than not having an official representative in the House of Lords. It is to be hoped that this question will be carefully considered by the British Government.

HITAVARTA,
Aug. 22nd, 1903.

62. The same paper prays that Lord Kitchener may be appointed to

Lord Kitchener recommended for the Officiating Viceroyship.

officiate as Viceroy during the coming interregnum. He has the ability to administer the affairs of the Indian Empire in a satisfactory manner.

HITAVARTA.

63. The same paper has the following:—

The exchange of gifts between Lord Curzon and the Raja of Benares.

It is said that the price of the cabinet and other articles of ivory which Lord Curzon had received from the Raja of Benares in exchange for a fowling-piece worth Rs. 300 is estimated at Rs. 10,000. Lord George Hamilton, in reply to the question asked with reference to that bargain, stated that the articles had been given to Lord Curzon as a present, in return for which His Excellency had presented the fowling-piece to the Raja of Benares. In fact, the transaction was of the nature of a mutual exchange of friendly gifts, and not of a purchase in the real sense of the term. If the explanation given by Lord George Hamilton is correct, we have no reason to blame Lord Curzon. We see that almost all officials receive *nazar* from Rajas and Raikes simply to please them. We see no harm in that. But if such *nazar* is extorted, the act must certainly be condemned. A lady correspondent of the *London Daily News* says that the Raja of Benares gave those articles unwillingly upon Lord Curzon's repeated demands for them. It may be that the Raja has given those things with the view of gaining some object, but now that his hope is frustrated, he is feeling sorry. If such be really the case, Lord Curzon has not acted wisely. We have no reason to disbelieve the lady correspondent of the *London Daily News*. We hope Lord Curzon will prove that his action in this affair is not unjustifiable. We do not think that in his dealings with the subject people of India he can be so mean.

HITAVARTA.

64. The same paper has the following:—

Lord George Hamilton.

India with its thirty crores of loyal people forms the biggest part of the British Empire, and she

HITAVARTA.

yields a revenue far larger than what is paid by any other part of it. The Secretaryship of such an important dominion as India ought to be given to a man of superior intellect and eminent political foresight. It is from the Secretary of State for India that the King obtains all his information with regard to the affairs of that State. The King being a foreigner has no opportunity, during the long time of his reign, to see with his own eyes the condition of his own poor subjects. The fate of such a country, therefore, largely depends upon the Secretary of State for India. India has the misfortune to be under the Secretaryship of Lord George Hamilton, who seems to be utterly devoid of the sense of duty. To gain his selfish object, he is capable of sacrificing the interests of the British Empire and the welfare of the thirty crores of Indian people. He made it a point to saddle India with a part of the cost of maintaining troops in South Africa, in spite of the strong protest of the Government of India. But it is said that India has been exempted from the payment of the above cost, but that she will have to bear another cost in the shape of increased pay of the European soldiers in India. So long as the Indians have life they will help the British Government in all emergencies. But we are sorry to say that the King and his Secretary of State for India feel no compassion for the poor and loyal Indian subjects, who are in a very critical condition on account of successive famines. This year, also, famine is staring them in the face. But Lord George Hamilton, in presenting the Indian budget to Parliament, said that rainfall had removed all fear of famine in India, taxes might easily be increased, and the surplus of the Indian revenue utilized for imperial purposes. We fear that His Majesty King Edward VII may have believed these statements of Lord George Hamilton. In fact, it is a very great misfortune to India that she has a man like Lord George Hamilton for her Secretary of State.

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 25th, 1903.

65. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 25th August has the following in its English columns:—

The ivory furniture affair.

We have not had our say on the ivory furniture affair which now bulks so largely in the eyes of the public. "The extension of Lord Curzon's term" has now been thrown into the background and the Press is sitting in judgment upon the indiscretion of Lord Curzon in having entered into a transaction with the Maharaja of Benares. The facts of the case are already known to the public. Lord Curzon stands charged with having taken some fancy articles from a Native Chief for a nominal price. One of the nine Commandments which the Viceroy should obey is, "Do not enter into any transaction with a Native Chief." The Maharaja would not have perhaps parted with what is alleged to be Indian Art materialised, if such an illustrious customer had not offered to purchase it. His Excellency should have resisted the temptation of purchasing the thing from one who from the relation subsisting between the parties is precluded from doing as he likes in the matter.

This is, as we understand, the head and front of His Excellency's offence, and the roaring lions of the justice-loving organs cannot pass over such a flagrant abuse of power on the part of His Excellency. It is no doubt to be expected that Cæsar's wife should be above suspicion, that the Viceroy should not swerve even by an inch from the high ideal of public duty. But when there is no definite information in our possession justifying the imputation of an unworthy motive to His Excellency, it does not also look well on the part of the too fastidious critics to try to hang and quarter him for what is a human weakness for which we make allowance every moment of our life. Lord Curzon by reason of his superior position does not forfeit his claim to indulgence which we are prepared to extend to every one. If our rulers are to be chastised first for their administrative indiscretion, then for their excusable human weaknesses, they will soon learn to appraise the newspaper censure at its true worth.

Then, again, we have a lurking suspicion that those on whose behalf so much interest is evinced by the Press think within themselves "Spare us from our friends." The Native Chiefs of the Maharaja of Nabha's type would much rather place their whole estate at His Excellency's disposal than think of incurring his displeasure. We therefore think that so much fuss about this trumpery affair is only an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

URIYA PAPERS.

66. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 8th August states that good rain fell during the first week of August. UTKALDIPIKA,
Aug. 8th, 1903.
67. The *Samvad Vahika* [Balasore] of the 6th August states that distress is anticipated in the Kamarda outpost of the Balasore district. The price of rice in that part of the Balasore district is rising. SAMAD VAHIKA,
Aug. 6th, 1903.
- Distress in a part of the Balasore district.
68. The *Garjatbasini* [Talcher] of the 8th August corrects a part of its statements reported in paragraph 69 of the report on Native Papers in Bengal for the week ending the 1st August 1903 on the strength of the report of the Manager of Pal Lahera, and states that though the dacoity did occur, many of the attendant incidents described therein were not true. GARJATBASINI,
Aug. 8th, 1903.
- A correction.
69. The same paper exhorts the public to patronise the matches that are manufactured at Kolah in Bilaspur, and which are reported to be as good and cheap as those imported from foreign countries, and hopes that a country-made manufacture of this kind will commend itself to the notice of the general Indian public. GARJATBASINI.
- Match manufacture at Kolah in Bilaspur.
70. The same paper states that one man died of tiger-mauling and another of snake-bite in the Talcher State last week. GARJATBASINI.
- Fatal casualties in the Talcher State.
71. The same paper states that a terrible man-eater was bagged in the Derrang pargana of the Talcher State by one Natabar, a distinguished *shikari* of the place, and that this has given great relief to the men and women of the neighbouring villages. GARJATBASINI.
- A tiger bagged in the Talcher State.
72. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 8th August is of opinion that the Chairmanship of the Cuttack Municipality having fallen vacant, it should be offered to Babu Ram Sankar Rai, who is not only able but experienced in many branches of the municipal administration. The writer regrets that the Municipality under its late Chairman contracted debts which are rapidly rising, and that no serious attempts have been made to liquidate the same. UTKALDIPIKA,
Aug. 8th, 1903.
- The Chairmanship of the Cuttack Municipality.
73. The same paper regrets that the cook-rooms in the Puri temple having proved unserviceable, the manager has been compelled to stop cooking there. As a consequence a large number of men and women who look up to the *Mahaprasad* for their daily food are put to great inconvenience. The writer therefore suggests that the Mahantas of the different *maths*, who are flourishing at the expense of Jagannath, should be compelled to contribute their quotas towards the expenses that may be incurred in repairing the cook-rooms, for it is they who are much benefited by these cook-rooms and are, as such, under an obligation to pay. The writer thinks that a sanction ought to attach to this obligation. The writer concludes by proposing to tax each pot of *Mahaprasad*, indented for by each *math*, until such period as may be found sufficient to enable the manager to raise the required amount. UTKALDIPIKA.
- The cook-rooms in the Puri temple.
74. After giving a short account of the proceedings connected with the distribution of prizes to the girls of the Ravenshaw Hindu Girls' School by Mrs. K. G. Gupta, under the presidency of Mr. K. G. Gupta, the Commissioner, the same paper, while admitting the interest taken in the institution by a large number of gentlemen in Cuttack and Orissa, agrees with the Commissioner in thinking that the institution has not achieved the desired amount of success. The writer supports the proposals of Mr. Gupta to convert the institution into a middle English school, to appoint lady teachers, and to secure a sufficient number of conveyances to carry the pupils to and from the school, and hopes that the nobility and gentry of Orissa will not fail to contribute their mite towards an institution that has been quietly but steadily educating their girls for a large number of years. UTKALDIPIKA.
- The Ravenshaw Hindu Girls' School, Cuttack.

UTKALDIPKA,
Aug. 8th, 1903.

75. Referring to the resolution which the Commissioner of Orissa has passed on the memorial, submitted by Lakshmi Bilashini Debi to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and forwarded to the Commissioner for disposal, the same paper, while commending the spirit in which the resolution has been worded, takes objection to those passages in which the Commissioner lays down that no procession with music must pass within a quarter of a mile of a place of Christian worship, and that the applicant for a license to conduct a street procession with music must pay the cost of entertaining one or more constables to accompany the procession and regulate traffic in the street through which it may pass. The writer argues that as a logical consequence of the first order, there can be no processions on Fridays, for the Muhammadans will demand the extension of the privilege to their masjids. As separate quarters are not assigned for Muhammadan and Christian residents of the Cuttack town, and as their residences are generally mixed up with those of the Hindus, it will be an interference with the religious practices of the people to promulgate such odd and impracticable executive orders. It is safer and wiser to confide in the discretion and forbearance of the elders of each community, who, no doubt, have an innate regard for the religious scruples of other people, than to attempt to teach them principles of moral conduct by the promulgation of executive orders. The second order of the Commissioner is equally injudicious, for it proposes to tax people for works for which they already pay taxes. Is not the preservation of peace a duty of the police? Is not the police supported by taxes realised from the people?

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,
Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 29th August, 1903.